

9. SEXUALITY AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Key concept 7

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1 - INTRODUCTION

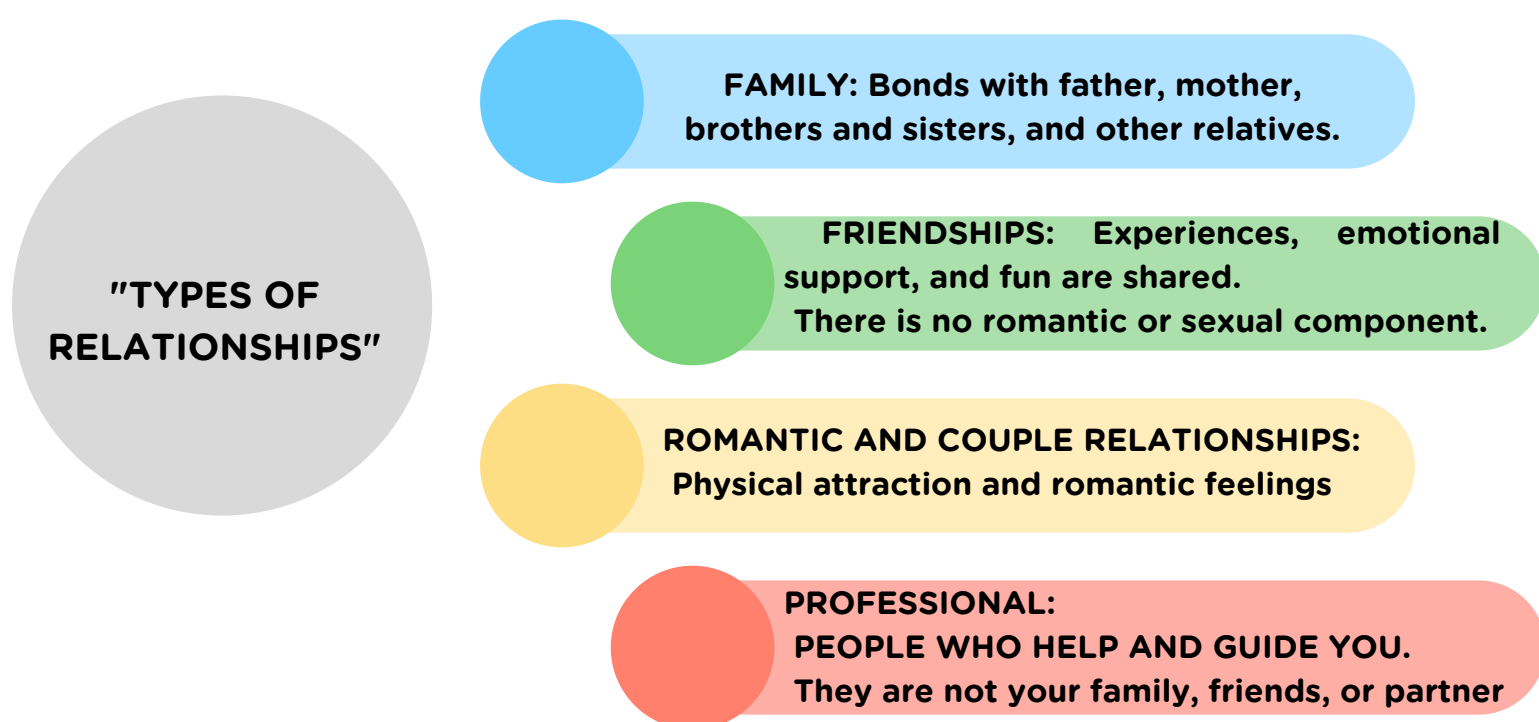
Este tema explora cómo las personas experimentan y expresan su sexualidad a lo largo de su vida y cómo sus conductas sexuales están determinadas por deseos, emociones, normas sociales y relaciones interpersonales.

En este contexto, se analizan aspectos como el desarrollo de la sexualidad, la diversidad en las relaciones íntimas y afectivas, y los factores que influyen en la respuesta sexual.

It is divided into the following topics:

- Sex, Sexuality and the Sexual Life Cycle
- Sexual Behaviour and Sexual Response

2. SEX, SEXUALITY AND THE SEXUAL LIFE CYCLE



2.1 ENJOYING THE BODY AND SEXUALITY IS NATURAL THROUGHOUT LIFE.

Human beings have the ability to enjoy their bodies, physical contact, and closeness with others from childhood to old age.

PLEASURE AND EXCITEMENT

All people can give and feel pleasure, and experience pleasant and exciting sensations. This can involve physical intimacy with others.

FORMS OF PLEASURE

Include kissing, caressing, hugging, and sexual intercourse. Always with consent

SEXUALITY

Involves emotional and physical attraction to other people

SEXUAL AND EMOTIONAL ATTRACTION

Sexuality encompasses not only the physical aspect, but also feelings and emotional connections

SEXUAL RELATIONS ARE PART OF THE EXPRESSION OF SEXUALITY.

They are a set of mutual actions between individuals to provide pleasure and/or reproduce the species

"EXPRESSION OF SEXUALITY:

People can express their sexuality in various ways, including:

- ✓ Emotional and romantic attraction: Forming affectionate bonds with others.
- ✓ Physical interactions: Kissing, hugging, caressing, and intimate contact

APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE CONTACT

It is essential that young people understand from an early age the difference between physical contact that is safe and affectionate, and contact that invades their boundaries or is harmful.

✓ Appropriate contact:

- Happens when both people agree (there is consent).
- It is respectful, affectionate, and safe.
- Examples: hugs between friends when both want them, a handshake, caresses between people with trusting relationships (for example, in a mutually respectful romantic relationship).

✗ Inappropriate contact:

- Occurs when someone touches another person without their permission or against their will.
- Includes non-consensual sexual touching, emotional manipulation to obtain physical contact, or abuse disguised as affection.
- It is also inappropriate when there is a power imbalance (for example, between an adult and a minor) that prevents consent from being free and genuine



PHYSICAL CONTACT CAN BE A PLEASANT WAY TO EXPRESS AFFECTION, AS LONG AS THERE IS MUTUAL CONSENT

CONSENT

- **CONSENT MEANS SAYING "YES" CLEARLY AND FREELY.**
- **SILENCE OR HESITATION IS NOT CONSENT.**
- **ANYONE CAN CHANGE THEIR MIND AT ANY TIME.**
- **CONSENT IS ONLY VALID IF THERE IS NO PRESSURE, FEAR, OR MANIPULATION**

EXAMPLES:

- ✓ **"IT'S OKAY IF YOU WANT TO HUG SOMEONE, BUT IT'S ALSO OKAY IF SOMEONE DOESN'T WANT YOU TO HUG THEM."**
- ✓ **"YOU CAN SAY NO TO ANY KIND OF PHYSICAL CONTACT, EVEN IF YOU HAD PREVIOUSLY SAID YES."**

- Use everyday examples:

"What would you do if someone hugs you and you don't want them to?"

"How would you ask them to stop?"

- Practice phrases for consent and refusal: **"I don't want to." "I'd prefer if you didn't touch me." "Is it okay if I give you a hug?"**
- Work with simulated cases (role-playing) to identify inappropriate forms of contact and how to react.
- Reinforce that consent applies at all times, even with friends, partners, or family members



SEXUAL CURIOSITY IS PART OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Feeling curiosity, having doubts, or asking questions about the body, sex, or relationships is normal at all stages of life.

It is essential to identify a trusted adult to talk about sexuality.

Different forms of expression: People express their sexuality in different ways.

Cultural diversity: The ways of living and expressing sexuality vary across cultures and should be respected.

SEXUALITY IS COMPLEX AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL.

Sexuality is not limited to the physical; it encompasses different aspects of the human experience.

- Biological: Genitals, hormones, puberty, reproduction.
- Psychological: Emotions, thoughts, self-esteem.
- Social: Roles, norms, interpersonal relationships.
- Spiritual: Values, personal beliefs.
- Ethical: What is considered right or wrong.
- Cultural: Customs and practices of each society.

3. SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AND SEXUAL RESPONSE.

Feelings, fantasies, and sexual desires

They are a natural and essential part of human development. Throughout life, people experience a wide range of emotions and thoughts related to sexuality, which can be influenced by biological, psychological, social, and cultural factors.

- They are natural responses to internal and external stimuli.
- They vary according to the stage of life and personal experiences.
- They do not necessarily imply the need to act on them.

**MANY PEOPLE EXPERIENCE SEXUAL DESIRE.
SOMETIMES WE MAY FEEL A STRONG DESIRE, AND
OTHER TIMES IT MAY FADE OR DISAPPEAR.**

TIPS FOR EXPLAINING:

What things can make us feel sexual desire?

- Sexual fantasies.
- Memories of past sexual experiences.
- The senses: sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch.

When you feel sexual desire, you can touch and caress your body to give yourself pleasure. This is healthy and natural, and it helps us get to know our bodies better and understand what we enjoy.



SEXUAL RESPONSE AND DESIRE ARE NATURAL AND VARY FROM PERSON TO PERSON.

Feeling pleasure and well-being is part of your sexuality. Sometimes you may want to caress your own body or that of someone you're attracted to.

NOT EVERYONE CHOOSES TO ACT ON THEIR SEXUAL FEELINGS OR DESIRES. REASONS MAY INCLUDE:

- ✓ Personal, religious, or cultural beliefs.
- ✓ Individual priorities, such as emotional or professional well-being.
- ✓ A lack of desire to act on them at a specific time.

CHANGES IN INTEREST IN SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH AGE, DUE TO:

- ✓ Hormonal and physical changes that occur with aging.
- ✓ Emotional changes and personal experiences.
- ✓ Social factors and relationship dynamics.

3.1 THE SEXUAL RESPONSE CYCLE

The sexual response cycle:

How the body reacts to stimulation from the beginning of a sexual encounter or masturbation.
It is expressed in the form of pleasure

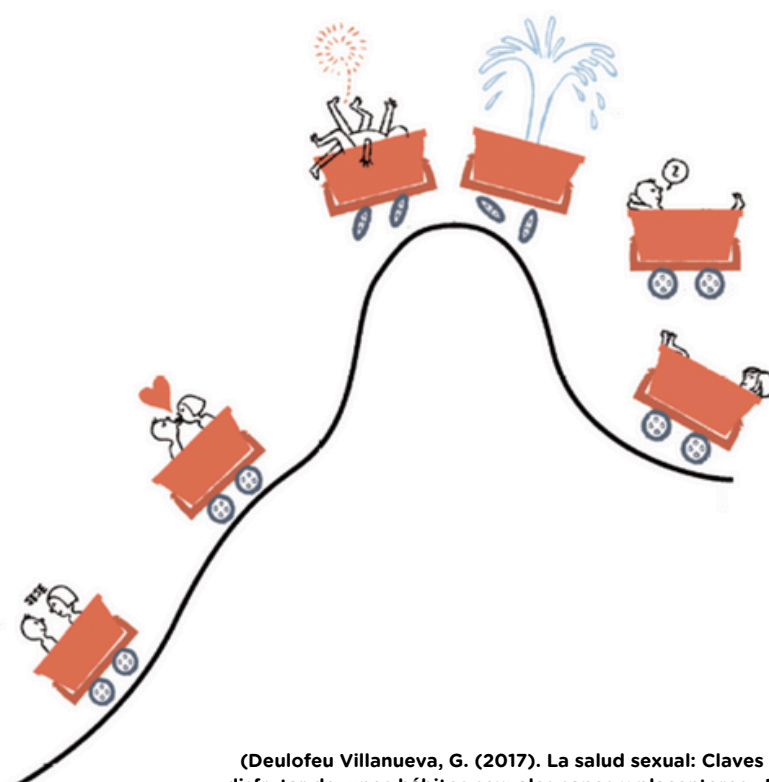


PUBERTY

AT THIS STAGE OF LIFE, AWARENESS OF SEXUAL SENSATIONS INCREASES. IT IS A STAGE OF SELF-DISCOVERY.

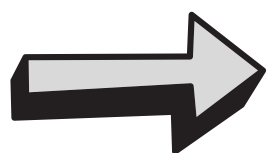
William Masters and Virginia Johnson (in 1965) were pioneers in the study of human sexuality. They identified the phases of sexual desire as: excitement, orgasm, ejaculation, and resolution. They structured the sexual response into four phases, although later authors added more phases. Helen S. Kaplan added a fifth phase, and in 1990, Sandra Leiblum added a sixth.

**PHASES OF THE SEXUAL RESPONSE CYCLE:Ç
DESIRE, AROUSAL (EXCITEMENT), ORGASM,
RESOLUTION, AND SATISFACTION.**



(Deulofeu Villanueva, G. (2017). La salud sexual: Claves para disfrutar de unos hábitos sexuales sanos y placenteros. Dincat Plena Inclusió Catalunya)

**USUALLY, ONE PHASE FOLLOWS THE OTHER,
BUT IT'S PERFECTLY OKAY IF YOU ONLY REACH PARTWAY
THROUGH OR STOP WHENEVER YOU WANT.**



MASTURBATION:

IT IS THE OBTAINING OF SEXUAL PLEASURE THROUGH SELF-STIMULATION OF THE GENITAL ORGANS.

IT'S A NATURAL FORM OF SEXUAL EXPLORATION; IT'S COMMON AND NATURAL.
IT DOESN'T CAUSE HARM AND SHOULD BE DONE IN PRIVATE.

BOYS AND GIRLS BEGIN MASTURBATING DURING PUBERTY OR SOMETIMES EARLIER.

KEY POINTS TO EXPLAIN TO YOUNG PEOPLE

- Masturbation is a common and natural practice.
- Masturbation allows us to know and explore our bodies and give ourselves pleasure.
- Both women and men can masturbate.
- You can masturbate yourself or caress another person, and the other person can masturbate you.
- You can also use sex toys to give yourself pleasure.
- Some people decide not to masturbate.

👉 Key message for young people:

“Exploring your body in private is normal. Learning to know yourself will help you make better decisions.”



SO, WHERE CAN YOU MASTURBATE?

MASTURBATION IS A PRIVATE ACTIVITY.
IT SHOULD BE DONE IN A PRIVATE PLACE
WHERE YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE.

3.2 Demystifying sexual behavior

Many misconceptions about sex are spread due to ignorance, shame, or prejudice. These myths create guilt, fear, or confusion and can prevent young people from developing in a healthy and safe way.

One of the topics surrounded by myths is masturbation, a practice that is part of body awareness, self-exploration, and well-being.

SOME MYTHS:

✗ MYTH	✓ REALITY
"Masturbating too much causes physical or mental harm."	"There is no scientific evidence that it causes harm if practiced in moderation and does not interfere with other activities."
"Only men masturbate."	"Masturbation is common among all people, regardless of gender."
"Only teenagers do it."	Masturbation can be practiced at any age as part of human sexual development.
"Masturbation causes acne."	Acne is related to hormonal changes, hygiene, genetics, and diet—not masturbation.

"3.3 SEXUALITY, CULTURE, AND GENERATION."

Each society, culture, and generation has its own myths about sexual behavior. In previous units, we have already mentioned how culture, society, and values influence sexuality.

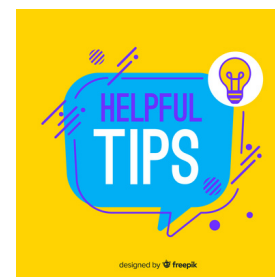
Each society, culture, and generation builds and transmits its own beliefs, norms, and values regarding sexual behavior.

It is important to actively question myths about sexual behaviors to avoid misinformation and promote respect for the diversity of experiences.

These constructions include myths and stereotypes that often misinform or cause guilt, shame, and fear in young people.

As educators, it is important to recognize that students come to the classroom with preconceived ideas that can negatively influence their self-esteem and sexual decisions.

IDENTIFYING AND QUESTIONING SEXUAL MYTHS



A key role of the educator is to foster critical thinking in students so that they can:

- Distinguish between myths and realities on topics such as virginity, pleasure, consent, sexual orientation, or contraceptive use.
- Question social discourses that promote stigmas or rigid gender roles regarding sexuality.
- Promote open and non-judgmental dialogue where young people can express their doubts and reflections without fear of being judged.

3.4 SEXUAL PLEASURE AND RESPONSIBILITY:



Key Elements of Sexual Pleasure and Responsibility

Sexual pleasure: Feeling pleasure is a valid and natural part of sexuality. It involves knowing yourself, exploring what you like, and sharing that enjoyment consensually with another person.

Consent: Every sexual experience must be based on a clear, enthusiastic, and free agreement between the people involved. Without consent, there is no respect.

Mutual care: Respecting the feelings, timing, needs, and boundaries of the other person is fundamental.

Sexual health: Sexuality should be experienced with care to avoid negative consequences such as unwanted pregnancies or diseases.

Preventing sexual risks: Using contraceptive and protective methods like condoms, getting medical check-ups, and having reliable information help prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancies. Unit 10 will address the prevention of unwanted pregnancy and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

3.5 COMMUNICATION DURING SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

WHY DOES GOOD COMMUNICATION IMPROVE THE SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP?

- **Builds trust:** Openly talking about what you like or don't like creates a safe environment, allowing everyone to feel secure enough to speak up.
- **Prevents misunderstandings:** By expressing your limits and desires, you reduce confusion that could lead to unwanted or uncomfortable situations.
- **Strengthens connection:** Knowing and respecting the other person's desires improves the sexual experience and the emotional relationship.

IN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS, THERE IS:
COMMUNICATION, RESPECT, AND TRUST.
THESE KINDS OF RELATIONSHIPS
MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD.

HOW TO COMMUNICATE YOUR SEXUAL NEEDS AND BOUNDARIES?



KNOW YOURSELF

Reflect on what makes you feel comfortable and what doesn't.

SPEAK DIRECTLY AND CLEARLY

Say how you feel
Ask for what you need

EXPLAIN WHAT YOU LIKE AND WHAT YOU DON'T:

to the other person—how you like to be kissed, hugged, or touched...

RESPECT THE OTHER PERSON

Listen without judging what the other person wants or needs. Respect it if they say NO

DON'T GIVE IN TO PRESSURE

No one has the right to demand that you do something you don't want to do.

HOW DO NORMS AND STEREOTYPES INFLUENCE OUR EXPERIENCE OF SEXUAL PLEASURE?

From childhood, we receive cultural messages that tell us how sexuality “should be” based on gender, sexual orientation, or even physical appearance. These stereotypes can cause:

SHAME OR GUILT

Many people are taught that sex is “dirty” or “sinful,” especially if they enjoy it outside certain contexts (like marriage).

Women, especially, may receive the message that enjoying sex is “inappropriate” or that they should be passive, which can cause guilt for feeling desire or pleasure.

LGBTIQ+ people may grow up feeling that their way of loving or desiring is “wrong” or “unnatural,” deeply affecting their self-esteem and their right to pleasure.

PRESSURE TO BEHAVE IN A CERTAIN WAY

Men are pressured to “prove their masculinity,” “take the lead,” or “have many experiences,” as if their worth depends on it.

Women may be expected to “wait,” “not desire too much,” not take initiative, or base their sexuality on pleasing others.

These ideas can create anxiety and make people act due to social pressure rather than what they truly want.

INEQUALITY IN ACCESS TO PLEASURE

Sex education often focuses more on preventing pregnancies or diseases and does not address pleasure, especially female pleasure or that of other gender identities.

In heterosexual relationships, there is often a focus on male orgasm, while female pleasure is sidelined or ignored.

This creates an incomplete and unbalanced view of sexuality, where not everyone feels valued or free to explore their sexuality.

Transforming these stereotypes is key to creating more equal, healthy relationships based on freedom. To achieve this, it is essential to start questioning what we have learned and encourage ourselves to live sexuality with responsibility, empathy, mutual respect, honesty, and self-care.



7. ISAWP PROJECT TEACHING MATERIALS : Inclusive Sexuality: A World of Possibilities

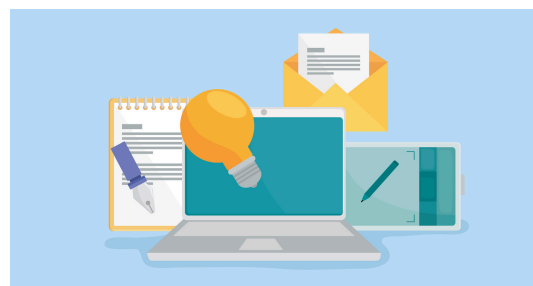
After the theoretical explanations, we now present the teaching materials developed within the framework of the ISAWP project: Inclusive Sexuality: A World of Possibilities. These materials will serve as the foundation for delivering the workshop.

Affective-Sexual Education for Young People with Disabilities which will be held in each of the project's partner countries.

These materials have been created specifically for the ISAWP project, following the key concepts recommended by UNESCO, and taking into account the necessary adaptations to ensure accessibility and suitability for the target group.

The teaching materials for Key Concept 7 have been developed by FAJUB, partner in the ISAWP project.

You can find the materials in "Unit 9 in Classroom".



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